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2021 Under Secretary for Health's Robert L. Jesse Award recognizes VA boundary-breaking innovations

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs honored three innovative health care practices and their creators late October with the [Robert L. Jesse Award for Excellence in Innovation](#).

In less than two months these trailblazing innovations are already impacting Veteran lives of VA's work in reproductive care, IT and 3D printing showcasing the department as a leader in health care.

"Innovation is how we truly break boundaries and forge a healthier future for all Veterans," said Veterans Health Administration Deputy Under Secretary for Health for the Office of Discovery Dr. Carolyn Clancy. "The Robert L. Jesse Award for Excellence in Innovation winners are shining examples of how VA is fulfilling [Secretary Denis McDonough's priority of providing all Veterans with timely, world class care](#)."

The award gives distinction to VA employees who have demonstrated brilliance enabling the discovery and spread of health care innovation that exceeds expectations, restores hope and builds trust within VA.

This year's awards are for the following categories:

- Clinical, for innovations involving clinical care efforts.
 - **PREPARE** - Perinatal Reproductive Education Planning and Resources is an internal, one stop shop for perinatal and postnatal Veterans and their families. The program consists of a multidisciplinary medical team that provides individual and family support to help Veteran families transition in a healthy way — both physically and mentally — after the birth or loss of a child. Program feedback has been positive and highly valued by the more than 100 Veterans and their families who have used it. As a result, VA is looking to expand.
- Non-Clinical, for IT and other non-care related innovations.
 - **Access to Care** - The VA Chief Technology Officer has digitized the process of validating military experience and enabled Veterans to complete clinical screenings from any connected device through an effort revolutionizing Veterans' ease of access to care. Implementation of this initiative has allowed patients to report their symptoms or complete standardized screenings in advance of their medical appointments, therefore facilitating an expedited and more efficient visit for both the Veteran and provider.
- Team, for innovations created by a group or organization within VA.
 - **3D Innovation** - The 3D Innovation Center at the Ralph H. Johnson Health Care System in Charleston, South Carolina is at the forefront of using 3D printing to develop customized care for Veterans. The center worked alongside local audiologists to develop the [Gio Stent](#), a medical device uniquely created for a specific Veteran's care and VHA's first 3D-printed device to receive compassionate use approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

The winners and finalists for the Robert L. Jesse Award for Excellence in Innovation were selected by a committee composed of leadership from across VHA. Learn more about the [creators of these innovations](#) and [VA innovations](#) as a whole.

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